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EXAMINER	
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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/731,038	TIDWELL ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	HAO FU	3696	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *12 March 2009*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-4,7-11,13-16 and 28-30* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-4, 7-11, 13-16, and 28-30* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Remarks

In the remarks filed on 03/12/2009, the applicants argue that Belyi, Brodie, Hanna, and Business Lawyer references do not teach the feature "assigning a positive pay category and determining a positive pay risk score based at least in part on the positive pay category". However, the applicants clearly have not considered the previous Office Action filed on 10/16/2008, in which this feature is rejected under the Belyi, Brodie, and Volgunin references. Volgunin teaches matching positive pay information, and assigning a positive pay category regarding to the matching, i.e. MATCH or NO (see paragraph 0019, 0023-0024, and 0044-0045). Volgunin also teaches determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on the assigned positive pay category (see paragraph 0044). Even though, the prior art teaches a confidence value or score for which the payee name in the check image matches the payee name in the check from the issued check file, this confidence value or score is nevertheless a risk score (because degree of confidence and risk are roughly the same) of positive pay information. The present claim language still reads on the prior art. To further distinguish the present invention from the prior art, the applicants may add claim language, such as "wherein the positive pay risk score expresses a degree of confidence in the likelihood of the check-cashing second party successfully settling the check with the check issuer if the check is accepted for cashing" (support can be found in paragraph 0012). The addition of this limitation should be sufficient to overcome the Volgunin reference.

The applicants also add the new limitation, "determining a transaction risk score based on the positive pay risk score and at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, wherein determining the transaction risk score comprises combining the positive pay risk score with the at least one other risk score; and determining based on the transaction risk score whether to authorize payment of the check". The examiner finds that Volgunin teaches or at least suggests "determining a transaction risk score based on at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check". Paragraph 0046 of Volgunin discloses the prior art invention can use other matching criteria and threshold value (interpreted as score) to determine the transaction risk. The example given by Volgunin teaches retrieving a portion of the address information to validate that the payee name corresponds to a location associated with a payee name. This limitation, regarding to "the at least one other risk score based on additional information", is the same as described in the newly added claim 29.

Other added limitations are derived from the canceled dependent claims, and these limitations are taught by Belyi and Brodie.

Claim Objection

Claim 29 is objected because the claim language, "the at least one other risk score", is inconsistent with the three listed risk scores in the claim. It is understood that "the at least one other risk score" is one risk score, and not three. The examiner interprets the claim as "wherein the at least one other risk score comprises a risk score

based on a biometric information for a check presenter, a risk score based on location information for the first party and the second party, or a risk score based on insignia-related information from the check."

Claim Rejection 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 1-4, 7, 13-16, and 28-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belyi et al. (Pub. No.: US 2005/0080717) in view of US Patent No.: 7,257,246 to Brodie et al., and Volgunin (Pub. No.: US 2003/0172030).

As per claim 1, Belyi teaches a method of scoring risk associated with cashing a check, the method comprising:

receiving information about a check presented to an entity for cashing (see paragraph 0011 and 0031);

accessing stored positive pay information about issued checks wherein said positive pay information indicates whether a check issuer is willing to honor the presented check (see paragraph 0032 and 0045); and

determining a transaction risk score based on the positive pay risk score and at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, wherein determining the transaction risk score comprises combining the positive pay risk score with the at least one other risk score (see paragraph 0013 and 0068, prior art teaches generating additional risk scores based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, and using these risk scores to perform a more in depth risk assessment to determine whether to authorize the transaction; it is interpreted that the generated risk scores are summed up for the final

decision on whether to authorize the transaction, and it would have been obvious to do so); and

determining based on the transaction risk score whether to authorize payment of the check (see paragraph 0013, 0057, and 0068; prior art teaches authorizing the transaction based on at least one risk score, which suggests that the authorization decision can be determined by summarizing multiple risk scores as the present claim).

Examiner notes however, Belyi teaches receiving information about a first party check and accessing stored positive pay information about issued "first party check". As such, Belyi fails to teach applying the procedure on "second party check," which is a check written by a first party and presented to an entity for cashing by a second party other than the first party check writing entity. Further more, Belyi fails to teach assessing the reliability of the positive pay information and uses this rating as part of risk scoring of second-party check.

Brodie teaches receiving information about a check presented to an entity for cashing (see abstract and column 10, line 4-11; also see column 9, line 23-29, which teaches creating a positive pay file for one or more payroll checks; a payroll check is a second-party check). Therefore, Brodie teaches receiving information about a check written by a first party and presented to an entity for cashing by a second party other than the first party check writing entity;

accessing stored positive pay information about issued checks wherein said positive pay information indicates whether a check issuer is willing to honor the presented check so as to reimburse an entity who has provided cash in return for accepting the check (see column 13, line 41-60; Brodie discloses that the presented check is a payroll check, which is written by an entity other than the check presenter or a so called "second-party check");

determining a risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on the positive pay information (see column 2, line 51-60);

determining a transaction risk score based on the positive pay risk score and at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, wherein determining the transaction risk score comprises combining the positive pay risk score with the at least one other risk score (see column 2, line 51-60; Brodie teaches each guidelines produces a factor score, and the processor calculates a cumulative score which is a function of the amalgamation of the factor scores and determines whether to approve the check based upon such cumulative score; in this case, factor scores can comprises positive pay score and other additional risk scores, and the cumulative score is the transaction risk score);

determining based on the transaction risk score whether to authorize payment of the check (see column 2, line 51-60).

More importantly, Brodie specifically discloses that the checks handled by the invention include payroll check (see column 9, line 24-29); payroll check is clearly a

"second-party check", which is a check that is written by one party for cashing by another party.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the reference to include receiving information about a check presented to an entity for cashing by an entity other than the check writing entity; accessing stored positive pay information about issued checks wherein said positive pay information indicates whether a check issuer is willing to honor the presented check so as to reimburse an entity who has provided cash in return for accepting the check; and determining a risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on the positive pay information.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference in order to provide risk assessment for merchant or financial institution to determine whether to accept the second-party check.

Examiner notes that Belyi does not explicitly teach assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check; and

determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category.

Volgunin teaches assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check (see paragraph 0023-0024 and 0040 for receiving check information by scanning and extracting information from the check; see paragraph 0043 for assessing stored positive pay information and comparing check information against issued check information or positive pay information; see paragraph 0019, 0022, and 0045, prior art shows the comparison results "YES" or "NO" match between the check information and the stored positive pay information); and

determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category (see paragraph 0025, 0026, 0044-0046, prior art teaches producing a similarity value or confidence value, which is an indicator of confidence that the check information matches the stored issued check file or positive pay information).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the reference to include assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check; and determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference in order to raise the security level of accepting a proffered check.

As per claim 2, Belyi teaches wherein receiving information about the presented check comprises receiving at least one of the set consisting of: bank number, account

number, check number, check issue date, check amount, payee identifier, and payor identifier (see paragraph 0031 and 0032).

As per claim 3, Belyi teaches wherein receiving information about the presented check comprises receiving information obtained from a magnetic ink character recognition (MICR) line on the check (see paragraph 0030 and 0031, "magnetic check reader").

As per claim 4, Belyi teaches wherein the positive pay risk score corresponds to a gradated level of confidence that the check will be honored by the check issuer (see paragraph 0013 and paragraph 0031, "transmitted information" mentioned in paragraph 0013 includes "positive pay information" described in paragraph 0031).

Claim 5 (Canceled)

Claim 6 (Canceled)

As per claim 7, Belyi teaches wherein the additional information comprises at least one of the set consisting of: additional information about the check, information about a check presenter associated with the check, and information about an entity to which the check is presented for cashing (see paragraph 0033).

Claim 12 (Canceled)

As per claim 13, Belyi teaches an apparatus that scores risk associated with accepting a check, the apparatus comprising:

a database that stores positive pay information about checks issued by check writers to payees wherein said positive pay information indicates issued checks that check writers are willing to honor (see paragraph 0067 and 0045);

a computer processor configured to receive input about a check presented to an entity by a check presenter claiming to be a payee (see paragraph 0011, see "point of sale device"), the computer processor further configured to use the input to access positive pay information from the database that is associated with the payor of the check (see paragraph 0032, for first party check, the payor is the same as the payee or the "customer", please refer to the next paragraph for further discussion),

determining a transaction risk score based on the positive pay risk score and at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, wherein determining the transaction risk score comprises combining the positive pay risk score with the at least one other risk score (see paragraph 0013 and 0068, prior art teaches generating additional risk scores based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, and using these risk scores to

perform a more in depth risk assessment to determine whether to authorize the transaction; it is interpreted that the generated risk scores are summed up for the final decision on whether to authorize the transaction, and it would have been obvious to do so),

determining based on the transaction risk score whether to authorize payment of the check (see paragraph 0013, 0057, and 0068; prior art teaches authorizing the transaction based on at least one risk score, which suggests that the authorization decision can be determined by summarizing multiple risk scores as the present claim), and

providing cash to the payee in return for accepting the check based at least in part on authorization payment of the check (see paragraph 0013 and 0065, transaction is proceeded when the check is authorized; it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that cash may be provided instead of goods or items, such transaction is commonly known as "cash back").

Note: Claim 13 is an independent claim, which does not mention about or second-party check at all. The claim language does not suggest the payee is different from the payor even after amendment. Therefore, under examiner's broadest interpretation, the check in this claim covers first-party check as well, in which the payor is the same person as the payee.

Examiner notes that Belyi does not explicitly teach assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check; and

determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category.

Brodie teaches determining a transaction risk score based on the positive pay risk score and at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, wherein determining the transaction risk score comprises combining the positive pay risk score with the at least one other risk score (see column 2, line 51-60; Brodie teaches each guidelines produces a factor score, and the processor calculates a cumulative score which is a function of the amalgamation of the factor scores and determines whether to approve the check based upon such cumulative score; in this case, factor scores can comprises positive pay score and other additional risk scores, and the cumulative score is the transaction risk score); and

determining based on the transaction risk score whether to authorize payment of the check (see column 2, line 51-60).

Volgunin teaches assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check (see paragraph 0023-0024 and 0040 for receiving check information by scanning and

extracting information from the check; see paragraph 0043 for assessing stored positive pay information and comparing check information against issued check information or positive pay information; see paragraph 0019, 0022, and 0045, prior art shows the comparison results "YES" or "NO" match between the check information and the stored positive pay information); and

determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category (see paragraph 0025, 0026, 0044-0046, prior art teaches producing a similarity value or confidence value, which is an indicator of confidence that the check information matches the stored issued check file or positive pay information).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the reference to include assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check; and determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference in order to raise the security level of accepting a proffered check.

As per claim 14, Belyi teaches wherein the database further stores information about issued checks that check writers are not willing to honor (see paragraph 0023).

As per claim 15, Belyi teaches wherein the computer processor is located at a check authorization system and the database is located at a financial entity external to the check authorization system (see paragraph 0011 and 0067, "external database").

As per claim 16, Belyi teaches wherein the computer processor is located at a check authorization system and the database is located at the check authorization system.

17-27 (Canceled).

As per claim 28, Belyi does not teach wherein the positive pay category is selected from a group consisting of: "match"; "no match"; "item paid"; "item stopped"; "item voided"; and "data unavailable".

Volgunin teaches teach wherein the positive pay category is selected from a group consisting of: "match"; "no match"; "item paid"; "item stopped"; "item voided"; and "data unavailable" (see paragraph 0019-0028 and 0045; prior art teaches assigning at least YES or NO in terms of matching between check information and positive pay information; the rest of the variation is obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the reference to include this feature. In light of KSR decision, use of known technique to improve similar devices (methods, or products) in the same way would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art.

As per claim 29, Belyi teaches generating additional risk scores for authorizing the check transaction (see paragraph 0013 and 0068). However, Belyi does not explicitly teach the at least one other risk score comprises a risk score based on biometric information for a check presenter, a risk score based on location information for the first party and the second party, or a risk score based on insignia-related information from the check.

Volgunin teaches the at least one other risk score comprises of a risk score based on location information for the payee (see paragraph 0046, the prior art verify the payee name with its corresponding address; it would have been obvious to verify the payor name and address as well).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the reference to include this feature for the benefit of increase security and lower the chance of fraud.

As per claim 30, Belyi teaches wherein the plurality of databases comprise at least one database internal to the check authorization system and one database external to the check authorization system (see paragraph 0067).

Claim 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belyi et al. (Pub. No.: US 2005/0080717) in view of US Patent No.: 7,257,246 to Brodie et al. and Volgunin (Pub. No.: US 2003/0172030), and further in view Engel et al. (Pub. No.: US 2004/0138975).

As per claim 8, Belyi teaches a computerized method for determining whether to authorize payment of a second-party check presented to an entity for processing, the method comprising:

obtaining with a point of sale device installed in an entity location data comprising at least one of: an account identifier, a check number, a check issue date, and an amount associated with a check presented for processing (see paragraph 0011 and 0032);

transmitting the data to a check authorization system (see paragraph 0011);

identifying at the check authorization system which of a plurality of positive pay databases is associated with the check (see paragraph 0038);

determining a transaction risk score based on the positive pay risk score and at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the

presented check, wherein determining the transaction risk score comprises combining the positive pay risk score with the at least one other risk score (see paragraph 0013 and 0068, prior art teaches generating additional risk scores based on additional information associated with cashing the presented check, and using these risk scores to perform a more in depth risk assessment to determine whether to authorize the transaction; it is interpreted that the generated risk scores are summed up for the final decision on whether to authorize the transaction, and it would have been obvious to do so); and

determining based at least in part on the transaction risk score whether to authorize payment of the check (see paragraph 0013 and 0057; prior art teaches authorizing the transaction based on at least one risk score, which suggests that the authorization decision can be determined by summarizing multiple risk scores as the present claim); and

transmitting a recommendation indicative of the authorization determination to the entity (see paragraph 0057).

Examiner notes however, Belyi fails to teach accessing the identified positive pay database associated with the second-party check and comparing the transmitted data and information stored in the positive pay database; and determining a risk score based at least in part on the comparison. Further more, Belyi fails to teach assessing the reliability of the positive pay information and uses this rating as part of risk scoring of second-party check.

Engel et al. teaches accessing the identified positive pay database associated with the check and comparing the transmitted data and information stored in the positive pay database (see paragraph 0031 and 0032); and

Brodie teaches similar procedures as above for "second-party check". Specifically, Brodie teaches obtaining with a point of sale device installed in an entity location data comprising at least one of: an account identifier, a check number, a check issue date, and an amount associated with a second-party check presented for processing (see abstract and column 10, line 4-11);

accessing the identified positive pay database associated with the second-party check and comparing the transmitted data and information stored in the positive pay database (see column 13, line 39-60; a payroll check is a second-party check);

determining a risk score associated with accepting the second-party check from a possessor of the check and providing valuable consideration to possessor in return for the second-party check based at least in part on the comparison (see column 2, line 51-60, and see column 9, line 23-29; the invention deals with payroll check, which is second-party check);

determining a transaction risk score based on the positive pay risk score and at least one other risk score based on additional information associated with cashing the

presented check, wherein determining the transaction risk score comprises combining the positive pay risk score with the at least one other risk score (see column 2, line 51-60; Brodie teaches each guidelines produces a factor score, and the processor calculates a cumulative score which is a function of the amalgamation of the factor scores and determines whether to approve the check based upon such cumulative score; in this case, factor scores can comprises positive pay score and other additional risk scores, and the cumulative score is the transaction risk score);

determining based on the transaction risk score whether to authorize payment of the check (see column 2, line 51-60).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify Belyi to include the steps of accessing the positive pay database, comparing the information, determining a risk score based at least in part on the comparison, and using the procedures on second-party check.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference in order to provide risk assessment for merchant or financial institution to determine whether to accept the second-party check.

Examiner notes that Belyi does not explicitly teach assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check; and

determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category.

Volgunin teaches assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check (see paragraph 0023-0024 and 0040 for receiving check information by scanning and extracting information from the check; see paragraph 0043 for assessing stored positive pay information and comparing check information against issued check information or positive pay information; see paragraph 0019, 0022, and 0045, prior art shows the comparison results "YES" or "NO" match between the check information and the stored positive pay information); and

determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category (see paragraph 0025, 0026, 0044-0046, prior art teaches producing a similarity value or confidence value, which is an indicator of confidence that the check information matches the stored issued check file or positive pay information).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the reference to include assigning a positive pay category based on a comparison of the stored positive pay information and the received information about the check; and determining a positive pay risk score associated with cashing the presented check based at least in part on assigned the positive pay category. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference in order to raise the security level of accepting a proffered check.

As per claim 9, Belyi teaches obtaining with the point of sale device information (see paragraph 0011); and

transmitting information to the check authorization system (see paragraph 0011).

Examiner notes however, Belyi does not specify the transmitted information as "payee information".

Brodie teaches obtaining with the point of sale device information about a payee of the second-party check (see column 5, line 21-32).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify Belyi to obtain payee information with the point of sale device and transmit payee information to the check authorization system.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference to provide more information for determining risk score.

As per claim 10, Belyi teaches determining whether to authorize payment of the second-party check comprises determining whether to guarantee the check (see paragraph 0026).

Examiner notes however, Belyi does not specifically teach applying such method on second-party check.

Brodie teaches similar method for second-party check (see abstract and column 9, line 23-29; a payroll check is a second-party check).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to combine the references to come up with determining whether to authorize payment of the second-party check comprises determining whether to guarantee the second-party check.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference in order to apply existing risk assessment method on second-party check.

As per claim 11, Belyi teaches determining whether to authorize payment of the second-party check further comprises determining whether to purchase the check from the entity (see paragraph 0028).

Examiner notes however, Belyi does not specifically teach applying such method on second-party check.

Brodie teaches similar method for second-party check (see abstract and column 9, line 23-29; a payroll check is a second-party check).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to combine the references to come up with determining whether to purchase the second-party check from the entity.

One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to modify the reference in order to apply existing risk assessment method on second-party check.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to HAO FU whose telephone number is (571)270-3441. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri/Mon-Thurs 7:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tom Dixon can be reached on (571) 272-6803. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/THOMAS A DIXON/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3696

Hao Fu
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MAY-09

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